

"But what about the tower?" was asked.

"I will take his place," explained Warne. "I've spent one or two nights there with him and I understand the routine fairly well. There's only two night trains to look out for. I'll attend to that and no one will know about it."

Warne hung his head with shame and remorse as he hastened to the tower. He felt abased, degraded. However, he made a vow never to touch a drop of liquor again. He reached the tower and sat down, reinforcing his solemn resolution by meditating with sincere contrition over his past careless, useless life.

A train passed at 10:15. He gave it the clear signal. A special was listed for an hour later. It was to be held until a west train sidetracked. Warne continued his reflections. He would be well out of the present predicament with the morning. Then for a new life. Alas! As the effects of the liquor he had taken began to wear away a dull lethargy overtook him.

Lure of fatality, retribution at the most critical juncture in his life—he slept.

It was with a mighty start, a sharp shock that Warne awoke. His face was blanched with terror as he glanced at the tower clock—it was after midnight!

"The special!" gasped the horrified Warne, trembling in every limb. Then came the dim echoes of a commotion in the direction of the bridge, hammering, voices, and among these latter accents of excitement and of distress.

Hatless, confused, Warne ran down from the tower. A man rushed from the direction of the bridge, toward bound. He shouted to a person scudding by him from the opposite direction:

"Over a hundred killed — It's a frightful wreck!"

After that for nearly a week Warne, a fugitive, half mad, haunted with constant terror and remorse, scarce

knew what he did. He had slept while a train dashing by unsignaled had gone down to wreck and ruin! Oh! he could figure it all out! A collision at the bridge and his the blame, his the sinful, wicked fault.

Then Canada, to hide far away from friends and the law, for was he not a murderer? And Elsie! An anguishing memory in his heart of hearts.

Coward, craven, poltroon, Ronald Warne called himself a score of times because he did not go back and face the music like a man. Then a restless longing for old scenes and back to a city where he was little known. All the finer artistic instincts of his nature were blunted and inert. Now, after idleness, abject poverty, he had secured work.

It was cheap, unworthy labor for a man of his former attainments—enlarging photographs on the crayon line—but it occupied him, it kept the wolf from the door.

It was dull, monotonous work, but there was even more than he could do. The lonely room he occupied was a safe hiding place to which his work was sent regularly from the firm employing him.

One day there was a shock. In the dusk of early evening a veiled lady was ushered into the poor excuse for a studio by the landlady.

"My, Wayne," spoke the latter, "this is a young lady who sent some work to your firm and you have it. She is to leave the city tomorrow and wishes to hurry up the order, if possible."

A great-gasp broke from the artist's lips as his visitor cast aside her veil.

"It is a picture of a relative," she began, and then—"Oh, Ronald!"

Yes, fate had thus strangely thrown Elsie Barker across his path again, for it was she—the same, sweet-faced maiden of old, but richly attired. In her gentle tones was manifest interest, the warmth of genuine friendship, perhaps something more.